

# THE VINITA WEEKLY CHIEFTAIN.

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## Garden Seeds Are All Gone But We Still Have Refrigerators. Darrough Hdw. Co

### BIG LAND GRAFT

Boston Scheme to Let Mississippi Choctaw's Lands.

### HAS A GREAT CINCH.

Indians Are Brought to the Territory Under Contract and Herded Like Sheep—What will the Government Do About It.

Boston syndicate has been formed to locate the Mississippi Choctaw Indians on their allotments in the Indian Territory and has applied to the department of the interior for permission to carry on the work. The syndicate agrees to transport the Indians from Mississippi to the Indian country and furnish them a living until they can improve their homesteads and can sell their surplus lands. This will take from one to five years. In return the syndicate demands half of the land of each Indian it locates. It offers to enter into such a contract and agree to put up bond with the interior department for the faithful performance of its duties under the contract. The department has written to Chairman Birby, of the Dawes commission, at Muskogee, I. T., for an opinion as to the advisability of granting the syndicate a license to operate its scheme.

If the plans of those who are operating the deals do not miscarry the Mississippi Choctaws will not have much more land at the end of five years than they had in Mississippi. The operators, under their contracts, will secure the rental money from the lands. At the end of the first year the Indians can sell one-eighth of their holdings. Under the contracts the operators will get that. At the end of three years the Indians can sell another eighth. The operators will get that. By this time the operators will be masters of the situation. They will own one-fourth of the land, hold leases on the remainder and under the circumstances no outsider will care to butt in. Then at the end of the five years they will get another quarter of the land at prices fixed by themselves and have the Mississippi Choctaws on hand to farm the land for them. The speculators are putting considerable money into the scheme. They stand to make millions because the Choctaw and Chickasaw country is heavily timbered and is good farming country beside. They stand in no great danger of losing out entirely. They are smooth enough to manipulate things. Their only danger is in the department stepping in and taking a hand and wiping out all contracts made by the Mississippi Choctaws. But this will not likely be done. Had the Mississippi Choctaws been left to shuffle for themselves scarcely any of them would have been able to come to the Indian country at all to take their allotments on account of their poverty. The government has never made any provision to transport them there. Their only show whatever was to sign up with the syndicates. The government, therefore, cannot with good grace stop the game. Whatever else a Choctaw Indian is guilty of he has never been charged with treachery. He is as faithful to a friend as a dog is to its master. He will, therefore, stick to the man or outfit of men who put up money to enable him to take his allotment even though in the end land is taken from him by

those who helped him to get it. The department will throw as many safeguards as possible around the Mississippi Choctaws to protect them by establishing sub-Indian agencies at Atoka and Tlanomingo.

### YEARGAIN CASE.

Particulars of This Interesting Case Made Public.

The Secretary of the Interior has advised the Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes that he has reconsidered the case of Joseph D. Yeargain et al, for enrollment in the Cherokee Nation and has reversed the decision of the Five Tribes Commission and ordered the applicants enrolled. The case is a very important one: Joseph D. and Scott A. Yeargain are brothers their names appear upon the 1880 authenticated tribal roll of the Cherokees, and also on all the subsequent rolls of the tribe; they were educated in the Cherokee schools, and in the year 1896 they removed from the Cherokee Nation to Southwest City, Mo., where they engaged in the mercantile business; they left their property, farms, effects and household goods in the Cherokee Nation and resided within a stone's throw of the Cherokee line in the state of Missouri; they voted in all of the elections in the Cherokee Nation since they were old enough to vote; never missed a single election; in 1897 Joseph D. Yeargain was elected as a member of the Cherokee Senate and served out the term, living at the same time in the state of Missouri; Scott A. Yeargain was a Cherokee census taker and assisted in taking the Cherokee roll of 1896; both voted in the state of Missouri in the presidential elections of 1896 and 1900. The Cherokees never denied them citizenship because the Cherokee Constitution provides that to forfeit one's citizenship three things are necessary: first, to remove from the Cherokee Nation; second, with all of one's efforts, and third, to become a citizen of another government. The Yeargains moved but left their effects, and while they voted in Missouri they continued to claim their residence in the Cherokee Nation and voted there, also; hence, their votes in Missouri were illegal.

The Dawes Commission rejected them because of the provision of the Curtis bill, which provides that no person shall be enrolled who has not before the passage of the Curtis bill (on June 28, 1898), removed to and in good faith settled in the Nation in which he claims citizenship. This decision was affirmed by the Secretary of the Interior, but was reconsidered and referred to Attorney General Vandevanter before the latter was appointed as judge of the Court of Appeals of the Eighth Circuit. Judge Vandevanter's decision reversed the decision of the Dawes Commission and gave the Yeargains the right to be enrolled as citizens of the Cherokee Nation. The error first made, according to the Attorney General's opinion, was in constructing too liberally the provisions of the Curtis act which were intended to cut off from participation in the Cherokee estate those Cherokees who had failed to take their residence under the control of the Cherokee Government, and other persons who had abandoned the country and had met none of the duties of good citizenship; where citizens had moved out with their effects and become citizens of the States and disconnected themselves with the Cherokee Nation, or having been re-admitted had failed to remove to and permanently settle in the Cherokee Nation prior to the passage of the Curtis act. In cases where they were citizens and left the country with their effects the Cherokee Constitution and not the Curtis act applies.

### A TEDIOUS TASK.

Wonderful Transformation In Indian Country.

### ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

The Long Drawn-out Work of the Dawes Commission In Settling With the Indian Continues Step By Step.

A staff correspondent of the Dallas News, writing from the Indian Territory says:—

Step by step the Federal Government is changing un-American conditions which exist in the Indian Territory. The transformation of an Indian's domain into a white man's country, the winding up of an estate in which many thousands of Indians will share and the great development of civil life and affairs has no parallel in the annals of American history. The evolution is the beneficent results of the policy of the Government, which undertook to bring the Territory out of the chaos of tribal life and government and elevate it to the standard of American citizenship and educate him to modern ideas has been a task of no less importance than to develop civil conditions in the new possessions of the United States. The Indians, as wards of the Government, have prospered under the guiding hand of their benefactor. The average red man is intelligent and familiar with everyday affairs. He is rich in land and happy in contentment. Save for the fullbloods, who can never shake off tribal traditions and institutions, the future of the North American Indian is promising. He will soon get an allotment of the average value of 320 acres. His share is worth \$1,048. His family shares equally in the devaluation of the land. The term "autocracy of the nation" is consistently applied to poor Lo. The younger generation starts in life with glowing prospects. The Indian movement to this country in exchange for their lands in the East began many years ago. Since 1833 they have maintained tribal government and traditions. Their laws were somewhat similar to those of the sovereign States but their power was autocratic within their jurisdiction. The most industrious Indians cultivated a small portion of the domain for domestic purposes. For years he lived in peace and absolute freedom. Hunting was his favorite pastime. Years rolled by and then changes came. Occasionally an Indian would lease his land to a stockman for grazing purposes, and then trouble began. In a short time there developed the greatest leasing system in the country. The passion of the white man who invaded the Territory were aroused to conquer and reduce the wilderness to a state of cultivation. Within the boundaries of this practically foreign Territory were thousands of persons without the consent of the tribe. It was at this juncture that the Federal Government stepped in to the powers of the non citizens and adjust matters between them and the common owners of the soil, the Indians. Conditions for many years were anomalous and relief was awaited as anxiously by the people as rain is awaited in a drought stricken community.

The work of the Federal Government has been tedious. To allot 80,000 Indians their proper share has been a task of considerable magnitude. The Dawes Com-

mission was created by a special act of Congress for this purpose.

In order to accomplish this it was necessary to survey, plat and classify the 19,000,000 acres in the Indian Territory. Treaties were necessary, rolls of bona fide Indians had to be made and many contested cases were to be settled. The Secretary of the Interior was often appealed to to settle disputed cases of citizenship. Unscrupulous persons sought to be admitted as members of the tribe. To guard against impositions representative Indians watched the enrollment. It was a vexatious problem to the Dawes Commission to determine the real owners of the land, those entitled to an apportionment of the estate, and out of the decision of the commission in many cases grew a great deal of dissatisfaction. The slightest trace of Indian blood in a white man entitled him to an allotment. Many who claimed this right appealed to the United States courts, and in many instances the courts admitted them to citizenship. The Indians protested and finally Congress passed a law creating a court to review the work of the courts which admitted parties to citizenship.

### WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

Man Swindles Her in the Marts and Lives in Idleness on Her Earnings.

By what commission, I would ask, does man hold his commission to keep in thrall the other half of humanity? Not, mark you, a wild or savage moiety as yet unfitted by moral or intellectual evolution to breathe the larger air of political freedom, but a hall that is his inseparable companion the partaker of his daily bread, the sharer of his life in all its phases—nay, much more—its very source and destiny—the mothers, wives and daughters of his race. Look up and down the perspective of the ages, and the eye shall rest upon a single cause. In the beginning man was bigger of bone and burlier in muscle than his mate, and use and wont have consecrated the brutish inequality into law. It is the chief glory of advancing civilization, however, to substitute the rule of right for the tyranny of might, to raise up the weak and to give to the minority a just protection. So now the old brute force is disguised under a new veneer of courtesy. We hear much of keeping woman in her exalted station, of preserving her unspotted from the mire of politics. Chivalry is the shibboleth.

Far be it from me to disparage by one word "that unbought grace of life," "that chastity of honor which felt a stain like a wound" and which now breathes alone the swift current of an all engulfing commercialism. But who cannot afford a snarl at a chivalry that laughs at the object of its devotion behind her back, keeps her standing when she should sit, swindles her in the marts, lives in idleness on her earnings, takes from her her good name and her children in the courts and then, keeping her on a plane with its idols and felons, refuses her the common means of self defense? Frankly I have no faith in this plea of chivalry. If they who advance it were sincere in their protestations how could they consent that all which is loveliest and best in character and morals should be excluded from direct influence on the public life? No, men deceive themselves. Behind this pretense a deep rooted conceit of their own intellectual superiority has supplanted the old masculine pride in the physical.

DR. HENRY D. BURNS.

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### NEW RAILROAD.

Contract Let To Build the Road from Vinita to Alva.

### MISSOURI PACIFIC.

Missouri, Oklahoma and Alva Railroad is the Name and the Contract Establishes the Road From Alva to Vinita. Work to Begin Within Ten Days.

We have the information from reliable authority, that is from the attorney who yesterday drew up the contract for the building of the road from Vinita to Alva, Oklahoma, that within ten days a party of surveyors will begin at this point and run westward to Alva, Oklahoma, locating a line of railroad.

The contract is already let for the building of this road and it is an absolute certainty so our informant says.

The Missouri Pacific is thought to be behind the project. It is to pass through in the direction of Centralia and incidentally tap the great coal fields to the northwest of Vinita.

As was forecasted in the Chieftain a week ago, the surveyors are in Vinita and will Wednesday morning start westward surveying a line from Vinita to Alva, Oklahoma. N. D. McGeendley is in charge of the party with a full equipment of civil and locating engineers.

The wagons and teams will arrive from Perkins this afternoon and work begins tomorrow. Little information could be gleaned from these gentlemen, as is usual, they were enjoined to secrecy.

The road will run through the rich coal fields west of town and on through the Osage country and the fertile section of Northern Oklahoma.

### The Territory Press.

Col. A. J. Blackwell, promoter and builder of our city, whose headright constituted the original townsite, has forsaken and has removed his family and household goods to Chelsea, I. T., where he will take up his residence among his Cherokee brethren. All of his numerous business and residence properties have been placed upon the market and will be sold.—Blackwell Item.

Wetherford Chronicle: The little delicate spindling le 3, cigarette-smoking dude, parts his hair in the middle, and wears gold rimmed lenses across his proboscis; and whose pants fit him so tight he looks as though he had been greased, and driven into them with a maul and that they had his him a lick too much; is all right as a parlor ornament, to engineer a soiree. But when the dignity of Uncle Sam is offended give us the sun-tanned, stalwart yarn-gallows, boys, who have had experience in geopolitics. One of these can chase a thousand dudes and can put ten thousand to flight.

Asher Alchemist: A man over at Wanette is distilling a new drink which he calls "Crawfish Whisky." He says that one drink of it will make a fellow bunt his hole. A reckless youth took three drinks in one day last week and was found down on a sand bar in the South Canadian trying to run his head in the sand. It has different effects on people. One fellow who lives over west of Box took a

drink of it and started for home. He went through Asher about an hour later, backing toward the Seminole nation at the rate of about eight miles an hour. The inventor claims that two long todies concocted from this article will make even Old Time "turn backward," and that the fellow who absorbs them will feel years and years younger. There used to be a little town in the brush a couple of miles north of Asher where a large amount of the celebrated "Crawfish" brand was consumed and the burg "went backwards" faster than anything on record. In fact it went backwards so far and so fast that it wore itself all out but a mail crane and the headquarters of a store whose headquarters are in Tecumseh. No thanks, I'll take a cigar.

We rather incline to the idea that Muskogee will have to recall her talk of the biggest town in the Indian Territory. The recent election is a very fair census, in as much as we believe an almost full vote has been cast both in Muskogee and Ardmore, at both places being hotly contested. Until we have been shown to the contrary, Ardmore will still wave the lilac plume, her vote being 1,670 with Muskogee 1,646.—Ardmoreite.

When Mayor Smith enters upon his duties, it is hoped he will look after the idlers upon the streets of Muskogee, without regard to race or color. The law against vagrants should be strictly enforced, and every man in this city, who has no "visible means of support" should be put to work. This is an era of activity and especially, it is so upon industrial lines, and an idle brain supplemented with an idle hand is the devil's workshop. The idler soon drifts into the thief and thief into the murderer, the burglar and the robber. Every able bodied man should be a bread winner and there should be municipal regulation along this line. "Order is heaven's first law," and the first law imposed upon fellow humanity was "by the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread."—Muskogee Times.

### THE CATTLE TAX UPHELD.

A Decision Rendered by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

The court of appeals of the District of Columbia has sustained the authority of the Indian tribes in the Indian territory to make the payment of a permit fee or tribal tax a prerequisite to grazing cattle and other live stock within the Indian territory by persons who are not members of the tribes, and has sustained the authority of the Secretary of the Interior to enforce such an Indian law by removing from the Indian territory all cattle and other live stock upon which this fee is not paid. The decision was in the case of Edwin T. Morris and other Texas cattle men against Ethan A. Hitchcock, Secretary of the Interior, in which the plaintiffs sought to enjoin the Secretary from removing from the Indian Territory cattle upon which they had refused to pay the tax.

### NATIONALS' CONVENTION

Will Meet at Bud Tucker Springs Second Monday in May.

The captains of the National party of the Cherokee Nation met in convention at Bud Tucker Springs, ten miles northwest of Tablequah, Tuesday and decided to call a convention of the party to meet at that place on the second Monday in May, for the purpose of making nominations for principal and assistant chiefs.

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